

REMARKS

Claims 1-19 are pending. Claims 1-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112. Claims 13, 14, 16, 18, and 19 are allowed. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, Applicants request the allowance of claims 1-19.

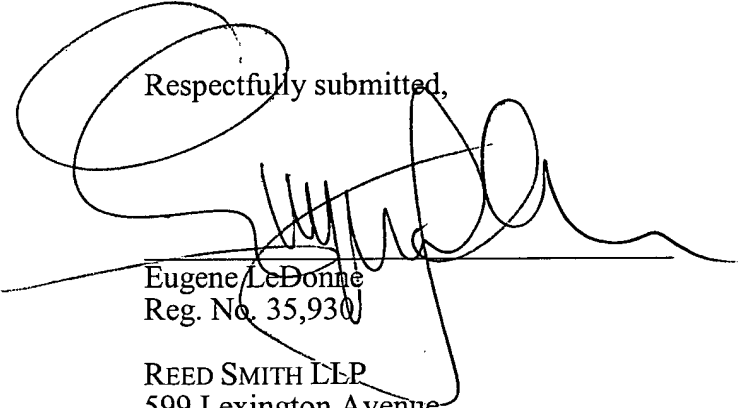
Claims 15 and 17 are objected to containing informalities. Claims 15 and 17 are amended to overcome the cited objections. No new matter is presented. Thus, in view of these amendments, Applicants request the withdrawal of the objections to claims 15 and 17.

Claims 1-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Specifically, the Examiner states that the phrase "in particular" in claims 1, 4, 11, and 12 renders these claims indefinite. The Examiner also suggests that the limitations regarding the forming of the coupling and/or decoupling apertures with the larger mode field diameter in claims 11 and 12 be provided in markush claim format. Claims 1, 4, 11, and 12 are amended to more clearly recite the features of the claimed invention. The amendments to claims 1, 4, 11, and 12 are merely cosmetic in nature and do not affect the scope of the claims. No new matter is presented. Therefore, Applicants request the withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 4, 11, and 12 under 35 U.S.C. 112.

Claims 2, 3, and 5-10 are dependent upon claims 1, 4, 11, and 12. Therefore, by this amendments to claims 1, 4, 11, and 12, Applicants request the withdrawal of claims 2, 3, and 5-10.

Applicants acknowledge the Examiner for the allowance of claims 13, 14, 16, 18, and 19 and indicating that claims 1-12, 15, and 17 contain allowable subject matter. Based upon the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request allowance of claims 1-19. Should the Examiner feel that a telephone conference with Applicant's attorney would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is urged to contact him at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,



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